



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO NEWS RELEASE

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IMMUNIZATIONS HELP SUPPRESS WHOOPING COUGH *Pertussis Continues to Make School Children Ill*

The number of pertussis cases continues its steady upward climb with four new cases at local schools this past week, the San Diego County Health and Human Services Agency reported today.

This year 239 whooping cough cases have been reported in the region, including the four school cases where others may have been exposed to the disease. The list of schools with new confirmed cases is on the second page. In 2010, pertussis reached a record 1,144 cases for the county, including two infant deaths.

"This year, the Tdap booster shot is also required for students entering 7th through 12th grade in the fall," said Wilma Wooten, M.D., M.P.H., County Public Health Officer. "We strongly urge the families of those students to avoid a back-to-school rush and get the Tdap vaccine as soon as possible rather than at the end of summer."

Residents can get vaccinated at their primary care doctor or at a HHSA Public Health Center if they don't have a regular healthcare provider.

The California Department of Public Health recommends a pertussis booster vaccine (Tdap) for everyone 10 years or older who has not yet received it, especially women of childbearing age, before, during, or immediately after pregnancy; and other people, including household contacts, caregivers, and healthcare workers, who have contact with pregnant women or infants. Children 7 to 9 years of age who did not receive all of their routine childhood shots are recommended to receive a Tdap booster dose.

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recommends that children get one dose of DTaP vaccine at the following ages: 2 months; 4 months; 6 months; 15 to 18 months and 4 to 6 years. Children should receive a Tdap booster shot at 11 or 12 years of age. Beginning July 1, all students in 7th through 12th grade, in public and private schools, must show proof that they had the pertussis booster shot before they return to school.

A typical case of pertussis starts with a cough and runny nose for one to two weeks, followed by weeks to months of rapid coughing fits that sometimes end with a whooping sound. Fever, if present, is usually mild. The disease is treatable with antibiotics. For more information about whooping cough, please call the HHSA Immunization Branch at (866) 358-2966, or visit the web site at www.sdiz.org.

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This week's new pertussis cases where there was a potential for public exposure are:

- A 10-year-old who is up-to-date with immunizations and attends Rock Springs Elementary School in the Escondido Union School District. Contact: Randy Garcia (760) 432-2247.
- An 8-year-old who is unimmunized and attends Ocean Beach Elementary School in the San Diego Unified School District. Contact: Linda Zintz (619) 725-5568.
- A 5-year-old who is up-to-date with immunizations and attends Monte Vista Elementary School in the Vista Unified School District. Contact: Steve Hargrave (760) 726-2170.
- A 4-year-old who is up-to-date with immunizations and attends LifeBridge Preschool in Rancho Bernardo. Contact: Nancy Merkes (858) 485-5933.

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